

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claim 1 is allowable and for indicating that claims 5 and 6 contain allowable subject matter.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-7 were pending in this application. By way of this reply, claims 5 and 6 have been cancelled and claims 8-11 have been added. Claims 1, 2, and 8 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 2 or 8.

Claim Amendments

Independent claim 2 has been amended to incorporate now-cancelled dependent claim 5, indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter. Thus, claim 2, as amended, is allowable. Further, dependent claim 6, indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter, has been rewritten in independent form as claim 8. Thus, claim 8 is allowable. Further, claims 1-4 have been amended to correct antecedent basis errors. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments.

New Claims

New claims 8-11 have been added by way of this reply. As discussed above, claim 6 has been cancelled and rewritten as new claim 8. Further, claims 9-11, containing limitations similar to claims 3, 4, and 7, respectively, have been added to depend from claim 8. Claims 9-11 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 8. No new subject matter has been added by way of new claims 8-11.

Rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 2-4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,798,785 issued to Hendricks. Claim 2 has been amended to incorporate all the limitations of allowable claim 5. Thus, claim 2, as amended, is allowable. Claims 3, 4, and 7, directly or indirectly dependent from claim 2, are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 04995/024001).

Dated: June 7, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Jonathan P. Osha
Registration No.: 33,986
OSHA · LIANG LLP
1221 McKinney St., Suite 2800
Houston, Texas 77010
(713) 228-8600
(713) 228-8778 (Fax)
Attorney for Applicant